

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this Application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-21 are pending in the present Application and Claims 3 and 9-21 were previously withdrawn. No new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Araki (U.S. Pat. No. 6,570,687) in view of Holender (U.S. Pat. No. 5,729,548) and Gutleber (U.S. Pat. No. 4,301,530); Claims 2 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Araki, Holender, and Gutleber in view of Roberts et al (U.S. Pat. No. 6,473,214, herein "Roberts"); and Claims 6 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Araki, Holender, and Gutleber in view of Mossberg et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,160,656, herein "Mossberg").

Initially, applicant and applicant's representative wish to thank Examiner Bello for the interview granted applicant's representative on January 24, 2006. During that interview the outstanding rejections were discussed in detail. During the interview applicant's representative pointed out distinctions between the claims and the Araki reference. Additionally, Applicants showed that the Araki reference does not describe receiving optical IP packets nor does Araki describe discriminating an optical IP packet with an encoded address and switching the output path of the optical IP packet based on the discrimination.

Turning now to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claim 1, 4, and 7 over Araki in view of Holender and Gutleber, that rejection is traversed.

As discussed in the interview, independent parent Claim 1 recites, in part,

receiving the optical IP packet at the node,
discriminating the optical IP packet by estimating peak
values of optical time correlations of the encoded destination
address information attached to the received optical IP packet
with encoded addresses,

switching to an output path for the optical IP packet based on a result of the discrimination step...

Araki discloses an optical packet exchange apparatus that receives an electrical packet, extracts a destination address and converts the extracted electrical destination address into an optical signal. Further, once the optical packet is switched, the optical signal is then converted back into an electrical signal for transmission.¹

In contrast, the network packet routing method recited in Claim 1, describes receiving an optical IP packet and discriminating the encoded destination address information attached to the received optical IP packet.

Accordingly, as discussed in the interview, the address extraction disclosed in Araki is performed in the electrical domain, while the discriminating recited in Claim 1 is preformed in the optical domain.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 1, patentably distinguishes over the teachings of Araki.

In addition, as Holender and/or Gutleber do not cure the above noted deficiencies of Araki, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn as to Claims 1, 4, and 7.

Moreover, with respect to the further dependent claims, applicants respectfully submit those claims also distinguish over the applied art, particularly as none of these further cited teachings to Holender, Gutleber, Mossberg or Roberts are believed to overcome the above-noted deficiencies of Araki.

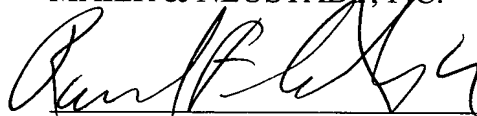
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 all be withdrawn.

¹ Araki, Fig 2 and 3.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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